

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SEOUL 00884 060814Z

11

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

IO-11 /073 W

----- 081871

P R 060750Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5338

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 0884

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT KS KN

SUBJECT: KIM IL SONG'S ABSENCE

1. ROK PRESS HAS OVER PAST TEN DAYS CARRIED SEVERAL ARTICLES PLAYING UP NORTH KOREAN LEADER KIM IL SUNG'S ABSENCE FROM PUBLIC AND SUGGESTING THAT IT MAY BE DUE TO ILLNESS AND MORE SPECIFICALLY, TO GROWTH ON NORTHERN PREMIER'S NECK. PRESS FEBRUARY 4 CARRIES TOKYO DATELINED ARTICLES UNDER SUCH HEADLINES AS "KIM ABSENCE FROM PUBLIC STIRS WILD SPECULATION" (KOREA HERALD). STORIES IN MOST PAPERS GIVE CLEAR IMPRESSION THEY THINK SOMETHING IS WRONG. TONGA ILBO HAS NOTED THAT KIM'S LAST KNOWN PUBLIC APPEARANCE WAS AT ARRIVAL SAO TOME PRINCIPE'S PRESIDENT DA COSTA'S DINNER FOR HIM DECEMBER 28. PRESS IS ATTRIBUTING KIM'S DISAPPEARANCE TO EITHER "CANCER ON THE BACK OF HIS NECK, "HYPERTENSION, OR HEART DISEASE.

2. APPARENTLY SOME OFFICIAL ROK CIRCLES ARE ALSO TAKING REPORTS OF KIM'S POSSIBLE ILLNESS SERIOUSLY. EMBOFF WAS APPROACHED RECENTLY BY SOUTH-NORTH COORDINATING COMMITTEE SPOKESMAN YI TONG-POK WHO CITED ABOVE EVIDENCE AND ASKED IF USG HAD ANY INFORMATION TO INDICATE KIM WAS ILL.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SEOUL 00884 060814Z

COMMENT: WHILE THERE ARE CONFLICTING THEORIES ON THE  
STATE OF KIM'S HEALTH, CURRENT REPORTS ARE SPECULATIVE  
AND OBVIOUSLY SPONSORED BY ROKG AUTHORITIES. AT THIS POINT  
BELIEVE WISHFUL THINKING ACCOUNTS FOR MUCH OF THE ATTENTION  
BEING GIVEN TO THIS SUBJECT BOTH BY THE PRESS AND  
IN OFFICIAL CIRCLES.  
SNEIDER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL LEADERS, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 06 FEB 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** izenbei0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976SEOUL00884  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760045-0721  
**From:** SEOUL  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760274/aaaacmrw.tel  
**Line Count:** 68  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** izenbei0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 26 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <26 MAY 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <22 SEP 2004 by izenbei0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** KIM IL SONG'S ABSENCE  
**TAGS:** PINT, KS, KN, (KIM IL SONG)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006